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Enhanced cooperation and policy and programme coordination, including the provision of further guidance to the Collaborative Partnership on Forests

International Year of Forests, 2011 activities: trends and lessons learned**

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The present note by the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat on the International Year of Forests, 2011 provides an overview of the thousands of activities that were held in celebration of the International Year. The Forum secretariat was designated by the General Assembly as the focal point for implementation of the Year. The report looks at these activities in the context of ongoing awareness-raising activities, and provides some lessons learned and trends based on the information submitted in voluntary reports from 70 countries and regional and subregional entities. This provides useful context for countries and organizations in planning their communications and media strategies and future outreach and awareness-raising activities, including in particular in the observance of the recently adopted International Day of Forests on 21 March every year.

Based on the information received through the voluntary reports, it is seen that global observances like International Years and International Days provide opportunities not only to amplify ongoing awareness-raising activities, but also to effectively influence policies and programmes. It is also generally observed that awareness-raising tends to include participatory approaches whereby communities and stakeholders are engaged in dialogue to enable sharing of success stories and best practices.

* E/CN.18/2013/1.

** The delay in the issuance of the present report was due to the need to include updated information.

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I. Introduction

1. On 20 December 2006, the General Assembly, in its resolution 61/193, declared 2011 the International Year of Forests and recognized that concerted efforts should focus on raising awareness at all levels to strengthen the sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of all types of forests for the benefit of current and future generations.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the secretariat of the United Nations Forum on Forests of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to serve as the focal point for the implementation of the Year, in collaboration with Governments, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests and international, regional and subregional organizations and processes and relevant major groups. It also encouraged voluntary partnerships among Member States, international organizations and major groups to facilitate and promote activities related to the Year at the local and national levels, including by creating national committees or designating focal points in their respective countries.

3. The present report provides some lessons learned and trends on activities held in celebration of the Year at the national, regional and international levels, taking into account reports received in response to notes verbale dated 17 October 2012, and information contained in voluntary national reports, voluntary reports by regional and subregional entities. In total, 63 countries[1] and 7 regional and subregional organizations[2] provided information on their activities held in support of the Year.

II. Importance of raising awareness

4. Awareness-raising provides a framework for interactive communication and information exchange, with the eventual goal being effecting change in attitudes and actions at the policy, institutional or individual levels. The main components for effective awareness-raising activities usually include messages targeted at specific audiences, and a communication strategy that provides information using multiple approaches. Target audiences can be both internal, such as organizational or external, such as the general public and political leaders. Target audiences are also often specific stakeholder groups, such as youth, civil society and private sector. Regardless of the audience, however, clear and consistent messaging is ultimately a key factor for success.

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[1] Afghanistan, Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Dominica, Ecuador, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Grenada, Guyana, India, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Liberia, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malaysia, Mexico, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Norway, Palestine, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Portugal, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Slovak Republic, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Saint Lucia, Sudan, Suriname, Switzerland, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, United States of America, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), Viet Nam and Zimbabwe.

[2] Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization, Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission, East African Community, Forest Europe, Near East Forestry and Range Commission, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and Economic Commission for Europe/Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Forestry and Timber Section.

5. In an era of information overload, communication and outreach is not an exercise in public relations; it is in fact an essential component of all aspects of development. The General Assembly, in its resolution 67/124 B, emphasized that public information and communication content should be at the heart of the strategic management of the United Nations and that a culture of communications and transparency should permeate all levels of the Organization. In the same resolution, the Assembly also recognized that developments in information and communications technologies open vast new opportunities for economic growth and social development and can play an important role in the eradication of poverty in developing countries.

Improving understanding and communication on forests

6. The need for greater political and public awareness of forests is frequently identified as a challenge in implementing sustainable forest management. At the recently concluded second ad hoc Expert Group meeting on forest financing (see E/CN.18/2013/12), experts called for strengthening communication strategies to improve public understanding of the importance of forests. The report of the Secretary-General on means of implementation, for the tenth session (see E/CN.18/2013/11) further recommended that knowledge sharing should be promoted to improve mutual understanding and communication between the forest sector and other sectors and institutional financial systems. This is seen to be necessary to help mobilize funding for forests at the national level, from other sectors, such as watersheds, rangelands, energy, agriculture and tourism sectors. The importance of raising public and political awareness through data and information, intersectoral cooperation and targeted communication was also highlighted by participants at the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Organization-Led Initiative on Forest Financing (see E/CN.18/AEG/2013/2).

7. In the context of the main theme of the current session, "Forests and economic development", the report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.18/2013/5) recommended that innovative communication tools on the contributions of forests and economic development be developed to engage decision-makers to consider forests in international and national policy agendas, including the post-2015 development agenda.

8. Raising awareness through communication and outreach is thus a bridging mechanism to enable cross-sectoral and cross-institutional collaboration. In their discussion paper for the current session (see E/CN.18/2013/7/Add.1), major groups noted the need to strengthen knowledge of the impacts of forests on other sectors, especially those that contribute to food security and drinking water. They also noted the need for public education programmes to raise awareness of how people everywhere depend on forests, as competing land uses continue to create pressure towards forest land conversion.

9. All of these issues were part of the key messages for the International Year of Forests, Forests 2011. The theme "Forests for people" highlighted the role of forests in people's lives, in providing essential values and benefits in a range of areas, including shelter, food, medicine and clean water. The Forests 2011 logo was designed to convey this theme, celebrating the central role of people in the sustainable management, conservation and sustainable development of our world's

forests. The iconographic elements in the design depicted multiple values of forests, including shelter, biodiversity, food, medicine, clean water and climate. All of these elements were intended to visually reinforce the message that forests are vital to the survival and well-being of people everywhere, all 7 billion of us.

III. International Year of Forests activities

10. The International Year of Forests, 2011 offered a unique platform to share success stories related to sustainable forest management around the world. In most cases, the Year provided an opportunity to amplify existing programmes and activities on raising awareness about forests, and to build new partnerships to coordinate activities held in celebration of the Year. Thousands of events and communication products were launched during the Year, which focused on communication with communities through meetings and workshops; education and capacity-building; contests and awards; exhibitions and displays; and publications including print-based, web-based and audiovisual products such as music CDs and videos. Following are some examples:

(a) 90 per cent of countries and regional organizations reported that they had hosted such special events as ceremonies, fairs, conferences and academic seminars or organized a congress or a capacity-building event;

(b) 52 per cent reported that they had held tree planting events involving community leaders, youth, ministers, civil society and a wide range of stakeholders. This had included the distribution of seedlings and providing post-planting information and guidelines to highlight the role of afforestation and restoration in sustainable forest management activities;

(c) 43 per cent of countries and regional organizations reported that their events had been targeted at engaging youth and school children;

(d) A third of the countries reported that they had held art or photography exhibitions to commemorate the International Year;

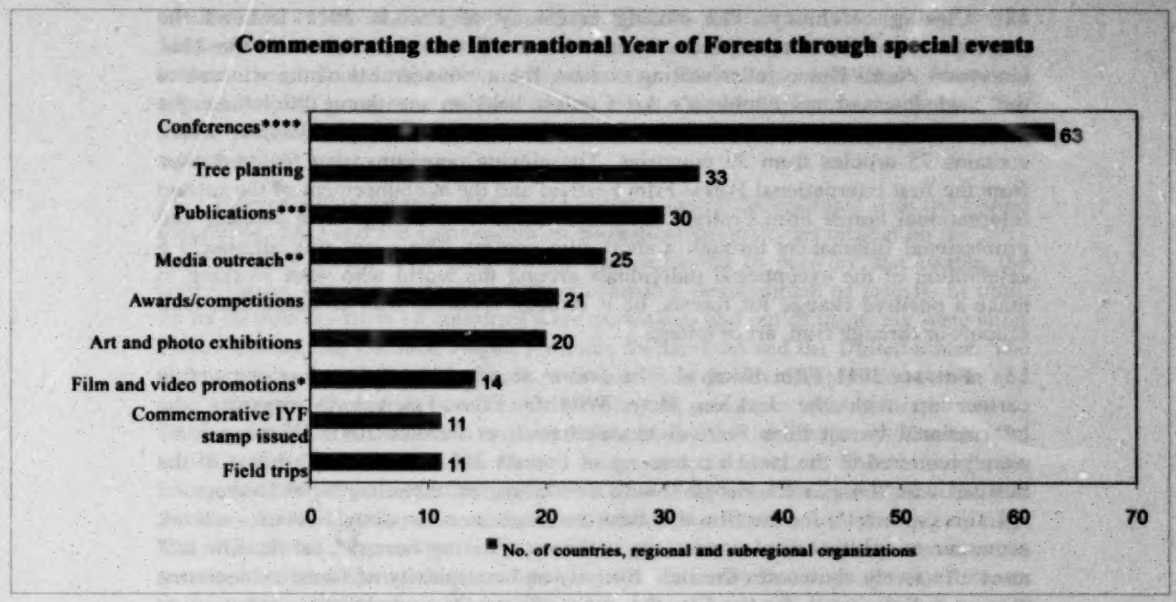
(e) 51 per cent of the countries and regional organizations reported that they had published special publications (books and websites) and reports for the International Year;

(f) 51 per cent of the countries and regional organizations created documentaries, launched film festivals and further enhanced their International Year outreach through radio and television programmes;

(g) Over a quarter of the countries reported that they had hosted special national awards and competitions to further commemorate the International Year;

(h) 17 per cent of countries reported that they had issued commemorative stamps for the International Year, as had the United Nations;

(i) 17 per cent of countries reported that they had updated regulations, strategies and protocols, and had signed onto new projects and created new partnerships.



Abbreviation: IYF, International Year of Forests.

* Includes documentaries, film festivals, public service announcements and promotional video clips.

** Includes television, radio and print media.

*** Includes special books, reports and websites for the International Year of Forests, 2011.

**** Includes ceremonies/galas, congresses, capacity-building workshops and academic seminars.

Activities of the Forum secretariat

11. **Global launch of the Year**. The global launch ceremony of Forests 2011 took place in the General Assembly during the high-level segment of the ninth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests. The President of the General Assembly presided over the programme, which featured inspiring speakers and films. Nobel peace laureate Wangari Maathai emphasized the importance of the International Year as an opportunity to explore the value of trees and forests, and highlighted the value of the environmental services that they provide to people. The official emissary of President Paul Kagame, Minister Stanislas Kamanzi (Rwanda), announced his country's border-to-border landscape restoration initiative to be achieved by 2035, involving landscape restoration of wetlands, small agriculture holdings, trees outside forests, forests, biodiversity protection and livelihoods for the 10.9 million people living on 26,000 square kilometres of land. International filmmaker Yann Arthus-Bertrand premiered his short film "Forest" at the launch. The film was narrated by United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for Biodiversity Edward Norton, and combined spectacular aerial footage with messages on people's reliance on forests. The launch event also featured two-minute clips from the winning films of the International Forest Film Festival. As part of the launch of the Year, the Forum secretariat projected the Forests 2011 logo on the side of the United Nations Secretariat building, leaving a lasting impression of the International Year on the iconic New York City skyline.

12. **Closing ceremony**. The closing ceremony of Forests 2011 featured the presentation of the Forest Heroes awards for the first time, winners of the 2011 Universal Postal Union letter-writing contest, the announcement of the winners of the 2011 International Children's Art Contest held on the theme "Celebrate the forests" and the launch of the commemorative book *Forests for People*, which contains 75 articles from 35 countries. The closing ceremony also featured clips from the first International Forest Film Festival and the announcement of the second International Forest Film Festival, which would seek to engage with amateur and professional filmmakers through a short film contest. The event was ultimately a celebration of the exceptional individuals around the world who were working to make a positive change for forests, be it through working with communities, with schools or through film, art or letters.

13. **Forests 2011 Film Festival**. The Forum secretariat developed an innovative partnership with the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival to organize the International Forest Film Festival in celebration of Forests 2011. Winning films were premiered at the launch ceremony of Forests 2011. The overall theme of the Festival was "Forests for People", with subcategories, including "360 Degrees on All Things Forest", for the film that best communicates humanity's social, cultural, economic or spiritual interconnectivity to forests; "Living Forests", for the film that most effectively showcases the rich diversity and complexity of forest ecosystems; "Issues & Solutions", for the film that most effectively communicates solutions to environmental and sustainability issues facing forests and the people relying on it; "Forest Hero", for the best film celebrating the work of individuals or groups committed to forest research and sustainability; "This is My Forest", for the film that most effectively tells a personal story of a forest; and "Shorts", awarded to the best film under 15 minutes in length. The Festival received 165 entries from 30 countries across six forest-related categories. The best was "The Queen of Trees", a visually stunning film that told the story of a single sycamore fig, Africa's queen tree. The film highlighted the complex interactions that take place in this microcosm between the animals, insects and people that this single tree supports.

14. The Film Festival was awarded the grand prize by CinemAmbiente, the leading environmental film festival in Europe. The Turin-based organization also coordinates the worldwide network of similar environmental film festivals and the Environmental Film Festival Network. Hundreds of film screenings were held around the world, and the feedback received was overwhelmingly positive. The success of the Film Festival is a credit to the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival. With a long history of working to raise awareness and empower action through the innovative use of media, the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival works with broadcasters, filmmakers and other industry stakeholders to expand the role of media in understanding wildlife and their habitats.

15. **Forest Heroes awards**. This programme was launched by the Forum secretariat to identify and honour the efforts of "everyday" people, who work tirelessly to nurture, protect and manage our forests around the world. Ninety nominations for Forest Heroes from 41 countries were received by the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat and 15 finalists were selected. The five regional winners were Africa's Paul Nzegha Mzeka (Cameroon), Asia's Shigeatsu Hatakeyama (Japan), Europe's Anatoly Lebedev (Russia), Latin America's Paulo Adario (Brazil) and North America's Rhiannon Tomtishen and Madison Vorva (United States of America). In addition, the jury decided to add a special

posthumous award in recognition of José Claudio Ribeiro and Maria do Espírito Santo, two activists in Brazil who were tragically murdered in 2011 while trying to protect their natural forests and livelihoods. Each hero embodied innovative approaches and grass-roots initiatives that make a direct impact on the forests. The Forest Heroes awards are being continued in 2012 and 2013 and winners will be awarded at the tenth session of the Forum.

16. **Future policy awards**. The World Future Council collaborated with the Forum secretariat, FAO and the Convention on Biological Diversity secretariat on the 2011 Future Policy award. The 2011 award was dedicated to policies that enable the conservation, the management and the sustainable development of forests. In total, 20 forest policies from 16 countries were nominated and out of these, six were short listed: Bhutan, the Gambia, Nepal, Rwanda, Switzerland and the United States. The Gold Award went to Rwanda for its national forest policy. Despite population and land pressures, Rwanda is on course to reaching its goal of increasing forest cover to 30 per cent of total land area and for border-to-border landscape restoration. The two Silver Awards went to the United States and the Gambia. The United States Lacey Act amendment of 2008 prohibits all trade in wood and plant products that are knowingly illegally sourced from a United States state or any foreign country. The Gambia's community forest policy has achieved incredible advances in sustainable forest management and poverty alleviation by handing control of forests to the communities that use them.

17. **Universal Postal Union 2011 letter-writing competition**. The Forum secretariat collaborated with the Universal Postal Union (UPU), the United Nations specialized agency for postal services, on their 2011 contest, with its theme on forests. Young people were asked to imagine themselves as a tree writing a letter to someone to explain why it is important to protect forests. More than 60 UPU member countries participated in the 2011 UPU competition. Worldwide, an estimated 2 million young people up to the age of 15 participated in the competition at the national level. A Great Oak in Guyana's Windsor Forest and an observant little tree "prepared to care for humanity" helped 15-year-old Charlée Gittens from Barbados and 13-year-old Wang Sa from China to win gold medals in this international contest.

18. **2011 International Children's Art Contest**. The Forum secretariat collaborated with the Gabarron Foundation and Queen Sofia's Children's Art Museum in Spain on the 2011 International Children's Art Contest, which had as its theme "Celebrate the forests". The contest challenged children between the ages of 5 and 14 to use the power of imagery to spread the message of the multifaceted value of forests and the people who depend on them. Nearly 2,000 drawings, paintings and collages from 50 countries were entered. The International Children's Art Contest has collected more than 50,000 works expressing the creative spirit of children internationally. Winners were announced at the Forests 2011 closing event, and an awards ceremony for the winners, featuring an exhibit of a selection of the artwork from the contest, was arranged in May 2012 at the Gabarron Carriage House Centre in New York.

19. **Forests for People**. This landmark publication was produced by the publishing company Tudor Rose, in collaboration with the Forum secretariat. It features statements of ministers and senior officials of international organizations and includes informative articles from 35 countries. The success stories in the book

reflect how people at all levels are changing their interaction with forests to sustainably manage these vital resources. The book was launched and distributed at the closing ceremony of the International Year.

20. **Forests 2011 website**. The website (www.un.org/forests) was launched on 4 October 2010, in collaboration with the Web Services Section of the Department of Public Information, and was re-designed during the course of 2011. The multimedia site featured slide shows, information on the International Forest Film Festival, the Forest Heroes, contests and awards, and promotional materials, including photographs, videos, fact sheets and brochures related to the Year. The site received over a million page views during the course of the Year.

21. **United Nations commemorative stamps**. The Forum secretariat partnered with the United Nations Postal Administration on a series of eight stamps to commemorate the International Year of Forests, illustrating the important role that trees and forests play in people's lives. The stamps were designed by internationally celebrated artist Sergio Baradat, highlighting the aesthetic beauty of forests and their vital link to life on Earth. They were issued in New York, Geneva and Vienna on 13 October 2011.

22. **Videos/films/public service announcements**. Video messages were produced featuring the Secretary-General, the United Nations Goodwill Ambassador for Biodiversity and 19 forest ministers and senior officials of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests. A forest public service announcement created by Adolescent TV for the Forum secretariat features a contemporary take on how everything, from the tea we drink to the furniture we use in our daily lives, has a forest within it. The video was made available from the Forests 2011 website and screened at events. Award-winning filmmaker and United Nations Environment Programme Goodwill Ambassador Yann Arthus-Bertrand produced the short film, *Of Forests and Men*, which is narrated by the Goodwill Ambassador for Biodiversity for Forests 2011. The film, which premiered at the Forests 2011 launch ceremony, was generously made available free of copyright.

IV. Lessons learned

23. Sharing information and promoting greater understanding of forests can be achieved through the multiple activities and strategies outlined above. However, changing individual or community practices and behaviour is more difficult to achieve and requires positive incentives. In the current environment of information overload, awareness-raising messages can be overlooked or ignored if the message does not have a personal impact. During the course of the Year, it was seen that activities that included personal stories resonated better than a simple presentation of facts and figures. "Informing to inspire action" was one of the driving forces of the International Year — the notion that people everywhere play a critical role in shaping their environment and ensuring the well-being of the forests that sustain them every day.

A. Human interest stories

24. Stories such as that of oyster fisherman and Forest Hero Mr. Hatakeyama, an iconic advocate of sustainable forests and farming practices in Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, an area that was devastated by the March 2011 tsunami, garnered interest from both the media and the public. The inspiring girl scouts, Ms. Tomtishen and Ms. Vorva, who began their campaign to raise awareness about palm oil and the destruction of rainforests when they were only 11 years old, drew attention. Now at 16, these inspiring young women are role models in their effort to change consumer behaviour and supply chain practices to help reduce deforestation.

B. Positive messages

25. One of the messages of the International Year was that everyone everywhere could make a difference with regard to forests. In this regard, forest restoration activities provided a compelling narrative. In particular, the story of China's Loess Plateau, where a dry, dusty plateau was transformed into a lush green landscape of forests and fields, sustaining livelihoods of over 2 million people, was dramatically portrayed in one of the winning films of the 2011 International Forest Film Festival, *Hope in a Changing Climate*.

26. Echoing the positive message of hope and optimism, at the launch of the International Year, Rwanda announced President Kagame's commitment to achieve border-to-border landscape restoration over the next 25 years. By 2015, Rwanda and its partners will have designed a restoration plan to achieve sustainable agricultural production, low carbon economic development, adequate water and energy supplies, increased forest cover and new opportunities for rural livelihoods. These were some of the positive stories that resonated.

C. Branding and visual identity

27. Providing consistent visual graphic elements for the thousands of events provided consistent branding. The official logo for the International Year was developed by the Forum secretariat in collaboration with the Graphics Design Unit of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat. The logo was approved by the United Nations Publications Board and launched in all official United Nations languages on 19 July 2010. It was first launched in the six official United Nations languages: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish. During the course of the International Year, and upon request by Member States, the logo was produced in 45 additional national languages.[3] Making the official logo available in that many national languages was unprecedented at the United Nations, and helped spread the message of the Year around the world.

[3] Including the six official United Nations languages, the logo was produced in a total of 52 languages: Arabic, Armenian, Austrian German, Basque, Belgian Dutch, Malay, Bulgarian, Catalan, Chinese Traditional, Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dutch, English, Estonian, Faroese, Fijian, Finnish, French, Georgian, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hungarian, Icelandic, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Khmer, Korean, Kyrgyz, Latvian, Lithuanian, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese, Romanian, Slovak, Slovenian, Spanish, Swahili, Swedish, Swiss French, Swiss German, Swiss Italian, Swiss Rumansch, Tagalog, Thai, Turkish, Ukranian, Vietnamese and Welsh.

D. Partnerships

28. To help facilitate the coordination of activities related to the Year, the Director of the Forum secretariat led the International Year of Forests team in building partnerships with leading international organizations in areas including film, media, art foundations and policy think tanks. These partnerships were instrumental in the success of the Year.

29. The International Year attracted partners from new stakeholders, the private sector, schools and museums. Demonstrating the cross-sector appeal of the International Year, the majority of logo requests from the private sector were not from the forestry industry, but rather were from the general public and the manufacturing, food and technology sectors.

30. A notable new partnership initiative forged during the Year was the creation of the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Communicators Group. This new joint initiative leveraged member outreach resources, tapping into different networks and maximized the reach of publications and communications products. The Group coordinated a series of joint press releases, videos and events, including as part of the Partnership's Forest Day events. In developing key messages, the Communicators Group identified a total of 24 forest-related thematic issues, which were featured in press releases and events and highlighted the cross-sectoral values and benefits of forests. Building on these activities during the International Year, the Collaborative Partnership on Forests also developed a new award honouring the life and work of Wangari Maathai, which was awarded in 2012.

E. International Day of Forests

31. On 21 December 2012, the General Assembly, in its resolution 67/200, declared 21 March to be the International Day of Forests. The declaration of the International Day builds on the national, regional and international actions carried out during the International Year and provides a platform to coordinate activities on raising awareness of the importance of all types of forests and of trees outside forests. In the resolution, the Assembly requested the Forum secretariat to facilitate the implementation of the International Day, in collaboration with FAO, Governments and other members of the Collaborative Partnerships on Forests, international, regional and subregional organizations and processes, and relevant major groups.

F. Funding

32. Activities conducted in relation to the International Year and global observances like the International Day of Forests are funded through voluntary contributions. As a result, the Forum secretariat, led by the Director, was actively engaged in seeking donor contributions throughout the Year to enable the secretariat to carry out the mandated coordination activities requested by the General Assembly. The secretariat was fortunate to secure contributions from Austria, Croatia and Norway, which provided a funding base for most of the activities carried out in 2010 and 2011.

33. Building on the successful implementation of the first International Forest Film Festival and first Forest Heroes awards, the secretariat was able to secure financial support from the United Kingdom to carry out the second International Forest Film Festival and second Forest Heroes awards. In addition, funding from the United Kingdom has also made it possible for the Forum secretariat to launch its first forest photography contest and forest mobile application. The winners of the photography contest will be awarded at the tenth session of the Forum and the mobile application will be launched prior to the tenth session.

V. Recommendations

34. Recognizing the need to raise awareness and share knowledge of sustainable management of all types of forests at all levels, the Forum may wish to consider the following recommendations:

(a) To request Member States to provide voluntary contributions to catalyse countries' substantively based data and information collection and to deepen public understanding of the multiple functions of forests and their essential role for life on this planet, and request the Forum secretariat to seek funding for such activities;

(b) To further encourage Member States to promote awareness of challenges and success stories related to implementing sustainable forest management at the national level, including as a means of promoting North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation;

(c) To encourage the creation of voluntary partnerships among Member States, international organizations and major groups organizations as part of ongoing activities to raise awareness of sustainable forest management at the local and national levels;

(d) To renew its invitation to Member States to celebrate the International Day of Forests on 21 March;

(e) To further encourage Governments, relevant regional and international organizations and major groups to organize activities related to all types of forests and trees outside forests, such as tree planting campaigns, at the time most appropriate to each State and support activities related to the International Day, inter alia, through voluntary contributions;

(f) To encourage all relevant organs of the United Nations, including the functional commissions and the regional commissions, as well as United Nations system agencies, funds and programmes, to fully support, contribute to and participate in the activities related to the observance of the International Day of Forests;

(g) To invite the Collaborative Partnership on Forests to continue to extend and deepen its work with the Collaborative Partnership on Forests Communicators Group;

(h) To promote observance of the International Day of Forests not as an isolated event, but as part of a continuing process of advocacy and partnership to foster greater awareness and action towards sustainable forest management at all levels.

Annex

Country and regional and subregional organization activities

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
Afghanistan	The National Environmental Protection Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) created forestry demonstration areas at the Badam Bagh Experimental Farm and in various districts in Afghanistan.
Albania	The Academy of Sciences of Albania of Sweden Royal Academy for Agriculture and Forestry organized an international conference on the theme "Forest policy in Albania to meet European Union standards"; Forests 2011 school activities, including tree planting; and a movie about the reforms in communal forestry in Albania and community involvement.
Argentina	Issued a commemorative stamp; produced brochures on the native forests and biodiversity of Argentina; broadcast conferences on television; organized participatory workshops; produced a special issue on forests for a children's environmental publication; and conducted tree planting.
Armenia	Organized an event to present the outputs of forest sector-related projects under implementation by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Regional Environmental Centre for the Caucasus and "Hayntar", a State non-commercial organization.
Australia	Forests 2011 was launched at a gala dinner at the Australian Parliament House on World Forestry Day; it was promoted through published forestry reports; educational activities for young school children across the country, including tree planting; universities hosted expert discussions and debates to promote the role of forestry in society.
Austria	Organized 30 major events and 100 other initiatives, including four high-level summits; a television series presenting forest-related programmes; a forest package was issued for every grade of elementary schools; 100 Forest Ambassadors were appointed as advocates for forest issues; a CD with classical forest-related music was produced by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; 4 million bottles of the mineral water "Forest Spring" carried information on forests and a quiz for winning attractive prizes on a monthly basis; raising revenue for forest projects in developing countries through a chocolate bar on "A piece of Forests".
Bangladesh	The Bangladesh Forest Department, in collaboration with the relevant stakeholders, organized the first forestry congress, the theme of which was "Forestry for Better Living".

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
Canada	Created a one-stop-shop website for the Forests 2011 promoted through 14,000 schools; the Royal Canadian Mint produced a series of coins on the boreal forest; promoted a Forests 2011 film festival in Toronto; commemorated the planting of its eight millionth tree under the 50 million tree project, which is connected to the United Nations Billion Tree Campaign; and a number of activities were also organized by local institutions during Alberta Forest Week.
China	Organized voluntary tree-planting activities; formulate the 2011 China Action Plan for the International Year of Forests; local governments formulated action plans in line with local conditions; encouraged the participation of youth, women, enterprises and social groups to participate in Forests 2011 activities through the Internet, media, lectures and competitions; organized the first Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation Meeting of Ministers Responsible for Forestry, the second FAO Asia-Pacific Forestry Week, the 24th Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission and other important international meetings.
Colombia	Organized an academic agenda through the year with photo, radio and video coverage including 19 conferences and 2 documentaries; issued a special Forests 2011 stamp; created an official forum of exchange through a website; proposed regulations and protocols on forest management; promoted greater public awareness through three quarterly publications and extensive media outreach.
Costa Rica	Organized 30 national, regional and local events, including the eighth Latin American Congress of Forestry and Environmental Law; for the first time, the target of 83 per cent produced wood came from legal and sustainable sources.
Côte d'Ivoire	Produced brochures, flyers, posters on the implementation of the United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Developing Countries and the forest, law enforcement, governance and trade process to inform the public and stakeholders; organized meetings and seminars with stakeholders, including the private sector on the benefits of sustainable forest management.
Croatia	Promoted Forests 2011 through public media from advertisements and articles on commemorative events to a 25 minute documentary film entitled "Forests in Croatia", as well as memorabilia such as wooden puzzles, T-shirts, posters and picture books; several elementary and high schools across the country organized workshops; a photographic exhibition on "Forests through the eye of a forester" toured United Nations Headquarters, Pennsylvania, the World Forestry Centre in Oregon and Croatia.

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
Cyprus	Distributed advocacy information on forests through leaflets, posters and signs posted along the main forest roads, television and radio broadcasting services, newspaper articles and the web page of the Department of Forests.
Dominica	Organized a special week of Forests 2011 activities, including an exhibition, radio and television broadcasts; an open day was planned, which allowed the public to visit the offices of the Forestry Division to learn first-hand about some of the activities of the Division.
Ecuador	Organized tree plantings, workshops, competitions and exhibitions; issued a commemorative stamp and publications; brokered new partnerships; engaged youth and adults alike to engage in celebrating the International Year.
Finland	Organized a high-level event to launch the International Year; held a future-oriented nationwide programme that focused on the forest sector, including the provision of information to school students.
France	Organized advocacy and educational activities, including publications, film debates, thematic exhibitions, forest tours and meetings with experts and the public.
Gabon	Organized 13 thematic lectures and debates; tree planting; photography exhibitions; created a forest Pygmy village; provided training and awareness-raising on forest and environmental protection.
Germany	Set up a national campaign to promote forests and forestry through 6,400 events, including fairs, billboards, film festivals, conferences and promotional material.
Ghana	Launched Forests 2011, along with national launches of the Anti-Bushfire Campaign, Greening Ghana Day and World Environment Day.
Grenada	Launched Forests 2011; collaborated with schools, the police force, youth leaders, the Scout movement, farmers and other stakeholders on a national tree planting event. The Forestry and National Parks Department, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and other partners, also demonstrated best practices and provided seedlings and technical support to stakeholders for sustainable forest management.
Guyana	Launched the International Year through a special session of the National Forest Forum; set up a national steering committee of community forest organizations to discuss the strategic orientation and activities of the Guyana Forestry Commission; continued emphasis on the mangrove restoration project to replenish the trees growing by the river banks.

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
India	Raised awareness on forests, wildlife, livelihood, urban forestry, non-timber forest products, joint forest management committees and forest conservation and organized workshops; issued a commemorative stamp for the Year; World Environment Day was celebrated on the theme of the Year; organized the first Indian forest congress; released *Voices from the Field* and *Status of Joint Forest Management in India* and the booklet "Extension Strategies in Forestry Research and Agroforestry Research"; additional programmes were organized through the year by communities, NGOs and the State Forest Department.
Israel	Organized a number of activities from thematic meetings to tree plantings.
Italy	Organized national and local events including the "Adopt the forest" campaign, photography exhibitions; supported the 2011 Roma forest conference.
Jamaica	Organized Forests 2011 launch ceremony; inaugurated "Forest Trek" to encourage awareness by experiencing forests first hand by 300 participants; tree planting; awarded prizes for songs and posters on "Forest for Life".
Japan	Established a national committee to manage the International Year activities; organized promotional activities, including issuance of a Forests 2011 commemorative stamp, tree planting ceremonies and awareness-raising events.
Jordan	Production and distribution of brochures among students; provided capacity-building and awareness for rangers; organized several lectures; planted 200,000 seedlings; organized workshops; formulated projects based on the participatory approach with local communities; and established a pilot afforestation project across 300 hectares.
Liberia	Organized awareness and sensitization programmes, both indoors and outdoors.
Luxembourg	Organized a multitude of activities broadcast through media outlets, including television and radio for wider reach; issued two stamps with forest motifs; organized concerts and plays in forests and theatres; produced two films and illustrated books; held art and photography exhibitions; organized conferences, workshops and seminars; held field trips for youth and adults.
Madagascar	Conducted a media outreach campaign through television, radio and newspapers, helped engage local communities, national authorities and NGOs, especially in the reforestation of different regions.

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
Malaysia	Organized commemoration ceremonies for Forests 2011, seminars, workshops, conferences, planting of mangroves and trees.
Mexico	Undertook a large number of activities to commemorate Forests 2011, including the issuance of a commemorative Forests 2011 stamp; a national forestry merit award and other national and local Forests 2011 contests for youth and adults alike; 70 exhibitions across museums, galleys and convention centres with 310,102 visitors; issued 11 different promotional items, including postcards and DVDs with Forests 2011 video; environmental fairs, workshops and conferences; web pages and lottery bills; tree plantings; building Forests 2011 partnerships with diverse stakeholders, including indigenous communities, the private sector, schools and civil society organizations.
Morocco	Organized special Forests 2011 events for children and forest experts on the role of forests in combating desertification, in wetlands; three national and one international exhibition; and the publication of a booklet on forest ecosystems.
Mozambique	Organized the national launch of Forests 2011; the creation of a technical committee; workshops; wide dissemination of Forests 2011 materials across forums, including books and calendars; 50 awareness campaigns, including debates; planted over 1,000 hectares under the presidential initiative "One child, one tree and one new forest, one community leader"; presented awards for the best community leader, schools and forest operator who had the best planted area.
Myanmar	Myanmar Forestry Week raised awareness through the encouragement of public participation in environmental conservation and forest development programmes.
Nepal	Celebrated Forests 2011 through forest conservation activities, including an international conference with Governments and NGOs, and through the commemoration of other environment-related international days such as World Environment Day, Wetlands Day, International Day of Biodiversity, International Tiger Day and others.
Nicaragua	Organized the Seventh Central American Congress on Forests, among other activities, such as exhibitions, awareness-raising campaigns on the role of forests in combating climate change, forests and governance and forest education.
Niger	Five prizes were awarded through a national competition held on the theme "Combating desertification" to encourage individual and community initiatives in the field of forestry; on National Tree Day tree planting and debates took place to convey core messages about the contribution of forests to the well-being of communities.

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
Norway	Norway, in cooperation with Spain, organized a Forest Europe ministerial conference in Oslo; the Norwegian Forestry Society organized several events throughout the country at the international, regional and local levels.
Palestine	Commemorated Forests 2011 through a multitude of activities, including the distribution of leaflets and deepening concepts on forests among school students and in the school curriculum.
Panama	Developed a training programme on the management of agroforestry systems in the Ngöbe Bugle region; developed technical documents on forests, including on forest inventory and sustainable planning and management of forests, to be implemented across 160,000 acres of natural forest.
Papua New Guinea	Formed a multi-stakeholder committee to manage Forests 2011 activities, including the launch; organized a seminar; planted 3 million trees; named tree species by provinces; wrote a chapter for a book on Forests of the Pacific Islands; held two forestry open days with NGOs, industry and public authorities.
Philippines	The Presidential Proclamation (No. 125) on the National Year of the Forests made possible the commemoration of Forests 2011 through public awareness programmes, greening initiatives, poverty reduction related activities and policy support.
Portugal	Organized the Forests 2011 launch; tree plantings; exhibitions; awareness raising and education campaigns, including a Forests 2011 website and pocket agenda; held scientific and technical seminars; workshops; contests and awards, including for photography contests, the "Discovering the Forest" contest for schools; the inaugural National Prize for Architecture in Wood, the forest-themed annual jewellery contest, and the Universal Postal Union "best letter" contest.
Russia	Undertook a large number of local, regional and international Forests 2011 activities, including foresters congresses, scientific conferences, forestry forums, meetings and public relations campaigns. These measures have facilitated the creation of new conditions for the formulation and implementation of the national forestry policy. Forests 2011 increased the role of civil society organizations in Russia on the management of forests.
Saudi Arabia	Produced awareness-raising materials such as posters and brochures; organized talks and presentations on Forests 2011 themes through the forest week, as well as cultural and economic events.
Slovak Republic	Organized exhibitions, communication campaigns (DVDs, posters, press conferences, etc.) and a special website on national level Forests 2011 activities; convened the National Philharmonic Orchestra in a national park; issued a postage stamp on forests; created education programmes targeted at youth and children.

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
South Africa	Organized symposiums and conferences, including the Fourth Forest Engineering Conference and the International Union for Conservation of Nature Regional Conservation Forum on Forests; encouraged tree planting in the context of the "Billion Tree" campaign; published the book *Green Heritage: Trees, Forests and Woodlands of South Africa*.
Sri Lanka	Launched a national tree planting campaign with the assistance of school children and local communities where 1.1 million trees were planted throughout the country; poster and essay competitions for school children were held island-wide; and a special stamp was issued to mark the occasion.
Saint Lucia	Organized panel discussions, exhibitions, photography competitions, tree planting campaigns, forest hikes, radio programmes, field trips and documentaries.
Sudan	Organized media campaigns launched through television, radio and newspapers; produced and distributed video clips and audio visuals to raise awareness of sustainable management, conservation and development of the Sudan's forests.
Suriname	Produced a television documentary on sustainable forest management in Suriname; a mobile exhibition for forest communities on forest preservation; an educational expedition to the botanical garden for school students; planted of mangrove trees in the coastal area to protect against seawater erosion; Tropenbos International Suriname produced a book on the Center for Agriculture Research in Suriname Management System.
Switzerland	The Federal Council approved forest policy 2020; launched a documentary and the campaign "Proud of Swiss wood" and organized a multitude of events to commemorate the Forests 2011.
Togo	Organized an exhibition of forest products and seedlings.
Trinidad-Tobago	Organized a series of exhibitions, lectures, tree planting exercises and an award ceremony for Forests 2011, including extension services and an incentive programme for private and community forestry, development and maintenance of visitor and forest recreation facilities, forest regeneration, forest protection and regeneration.
Turkey	Launched Forests 2011; organized exhibitions including Turkey's national parks photography exhibition; planted trees; produced a documentary on nine Turkish forest "hot spots".

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
Ukraine	Launched the Forests 2011 campaign "Future forest in your hands"; 85,000 people (students, NGOs, local authorities) planted 64 million seedlings across 12,000 hectares; competitions included photography contests, logging championships, children's essays and drawings on forestry topics; organized 295 lectures for 19,000 people and 97 study tours for 7,500 people; completed additional initiatives by local forest authorities.
USA	Launched an interactive Forests 2011 website; organized 115 events across 34 States and one territory, including mini-film festivals; art exhibitions; tree plantings; and national television broadcasts.
Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)	Organized the sixth Venezuelan forestry congress; Forests 2011 conferences and workshops; and tree planting activities.
Vietnam	Organized a series of Forests 2011 events, including letter writing contests and exhibitions on Viet Nam forests; produced the documentary "Climate change and the role of forests"; produced the first forest products festival in Viet Nam; held workshops; and organized tree plantings.
Zimbabwe	Organized forest fairs and field days; held national awareness-raising campaigns; workshops; tree-planting activities; encouraged the participation of youth and communities alike.
Regional and subregional organizations	
Amazon Cooperation Treaty Organization	Actively participated in the Forests 2011 celebrations; developed and implemented a regional agenda of commemorative activities, including competitions, conferences and workshops, which are listed in a publication.
Asia-Pacific Forestry Commission	In collaboration with Collaborative Partnership on Forests member organizations, developed joint communication materials to convey key messages relating to forests during the International Year of Forests. Also, the Asia-Pacific Forestry Week included film screenings by the International Forest Film Festival, launched by the United Nations Forum on Forests secretariat, in partnership with the Jackson Hole Wildlife Film Festival.
East African Community	Consolidated the submission of the East African Community Partner States Plans and Programme for the Forests 2011 celebration; coordinated the nominations of Partner States for the 2011/12 Forest Hero Awards.

Country	*Excerpt of Forests 2011 activities*
Forest Europe (ministerial conference on the protection of forests in Europe)	Ministers responsible for forests in Europe met to jointly position the issue of the continent's forests, in national and international agendas; the conference was attended by 42 high-level country representatives, the European Union, 6 observer countries from outside Europe and 29 international organizations. The ministers responsible for forests adopted a decision and a mandate in which they reflected on the future direction of Forest Europe to preserve forests and safeguard ongoing provision of their economic, environmental and societal benefits.
Near East Forestry and Range Commission	Increased the momentum on Forests 2011 communications highlighting drylands in international conventions and bodies.
Secretariat of the Pacific Community	The Forests and Trees Team successfully organized a number of activities, including the publication of a new book on Pacific forestry, supporting some national celebrations, awards, essay writing and poster competitions for school children and awards for forestry and agroforestry entrepreneurs.
ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section	Launched a PhD thesis award on sustainable forest management in the ECE region, sponsored by Pictet, one of Switzerland's largest private banks. The *Forest Europe/ECE/FAO State of Europe's Forests* 2011 report provides decision makers and the broad public with up-to-date, comprehensive and fact-based information on the status and trends in forests and sustainable forest management in Europe.